

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**PSC SUSTAINS QWEST CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS  
IN VALENTINE EXCHANGE**

LINCOLN – The Nebraska Public Service Commission sustained complaints alleging poor service by Qwest in its Valentine exchange.

The Commission ruled Tuesday that “Qwest failed to provide adequate service; failed to install and maintain adequate plant; and failed to keep or comply with an adequate maintenance program in violation of Commission orders and rules and regulations.”

Fifth District Commissioner Jerry Vap of McCook, who chaired the hearing conducted July 20 in Valentine, said, “The order finds that Qwest failed to provide good quality service to the Valentine exchange. Qwest has been ordered to repair the system so the people of the Valentine exchange get the quality of service that they are entitled to.”

First District Commissioner Frank Landis of Lincoln said, “All Nebraskans deserve a standard of highly reliable telephone service for their monthly customer charges. In this case, Qwest wasn’t even close.”

In its findings, the Commission said, “Qwest repeatedly ignored recurring service quality issues. Some customers reported recurrence of problems immediately or shortly after a repair was completed.”

A complaint was filed against Qwest by the Commission’s Telecommunications and Universal Service Fund Departments after receiving an unusual number of service quality complaints from rural subscribers in the Valentine exchange beginning in June of 2005. In its Tuesday decision, the Commission said Qwest must inspect and thoroughly test each segment of cable on all five rural cable routes in the Valentine exchange before the end of the year.

The Commission also said that Qwest shall replace any cable found to be substandard in its entirety and not splice around sections of defective cable. Qwest has until June 30 to repair or replace substandard cable and other equipment.

Qwest must also provide to the Commission reports of all testing and repairs or replacements involving the five rural cable routes. In addition, Qwest must provide monthly trouble report rates for retail and wholesale subscribers as well as individual trouble reports for subscribers to include any repeat trouble reports received. Qwest also will report outages including the date, duration, and the date the outage was resolved.

The Commission chose not to levy fines on Qwest, but reserved the ability to exercise its fining authority if Qwest fails to abide by the terms of Tuesday’s order. In addition, the Commission has the authority to order Qwest to issue refunds to subscribers for inadequate service.

Vap said, “The Commission would rather the money that would have been paid in fines be put into repairs and maintenance of the system for the customers.”

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